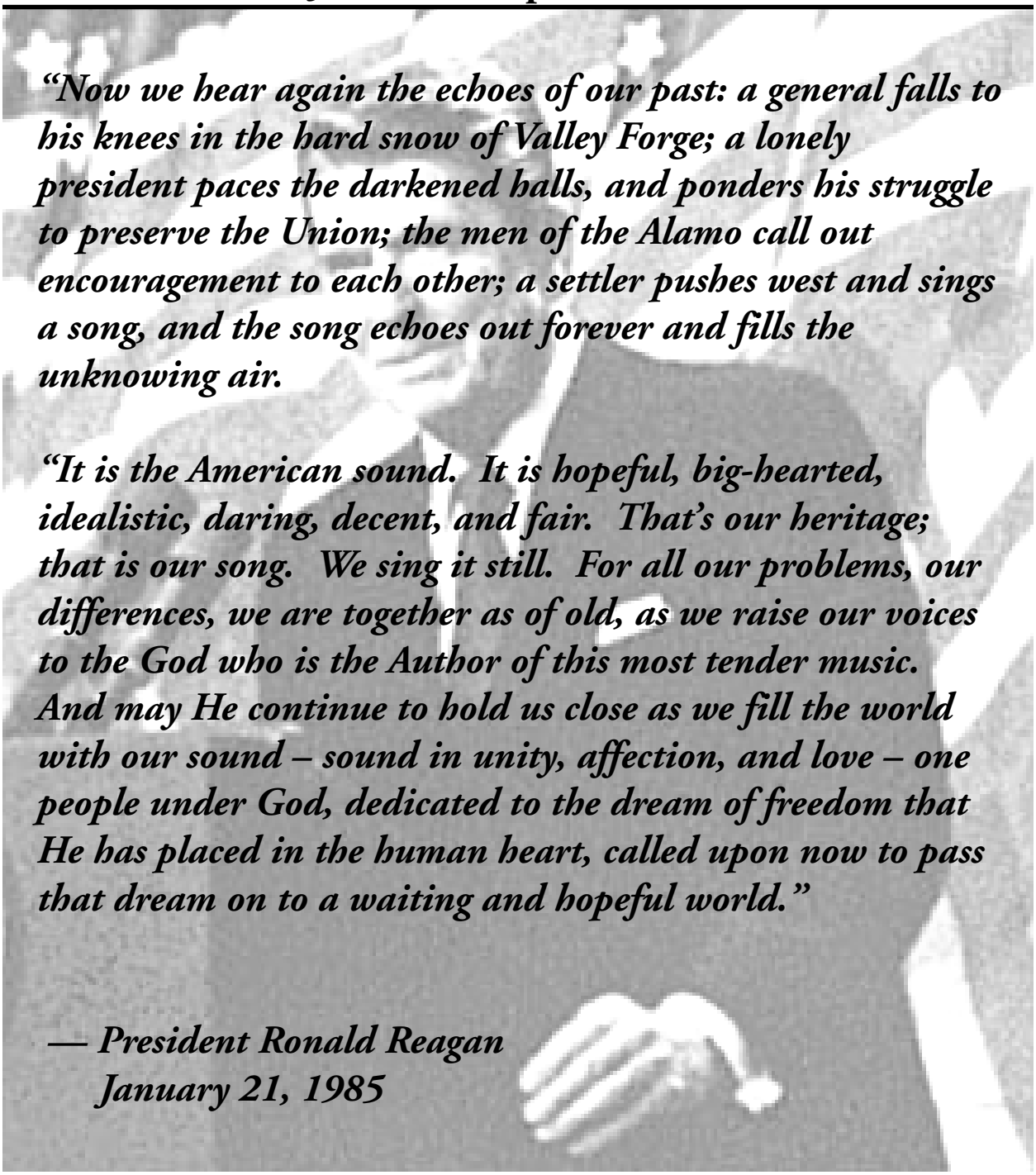
The American Sound

A Journal of Republican Ideas



"Now we hear again the echoes of our past: a general falls to his knees in the hard snow of Valley Forge; a lonely president paces the darkened halls, and ponders his struggle to preserve the Union; the men of the Alamo call out encouragement to each other; a settler pushes west and sings a song, and the song echoes out forever and fills the unknowing air.

"It is the American sound. It is hopeful, big-hearted, idealistic, daring, decent, and fair. That's our heritage; that is our song. We sing it still. For all our problems, our differences, we are together as of old, as we raise our voices to the God who is the Author of this most tender music. And may He continue to hold us close as we fill the world with our sound – sound in unity, affection, and love – one people under God, dedicated to the dream of freedom that He has placed in the human heart, called upon now to pass that dream on to a waiting and hopeful world."

— President Ronald Reagan
January 21, 1985

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PROVIDING FOR THE COMMON DEFENSE

by Reps. John Boehner and James Talent

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

— Preamble to the Constitution of the United States

It rests in the very first sentence of the Constitution. As they proposed a structure of government never before envisioned, the Founding Fathers took care to identify the expected responsibilities of this new institution. Among the explicit duties they set forth was that the federal government should "provide for the common defence."

Today, more than two centuries later, this charge remains one of the preeminent responsibilities of the federal government. This year, the United States will spend more than $270 billion dollars on national defense. It may seem like an extraordinarily large amount of money, but compared to historical numbers, it's actually quite small. And it almost certainly won't be enough.

Indeed, a number of factors – extended deployments, personnel reductions, inadequate funding for both modernization and research and development, the increasingly less-guarded statements of our Service Chiefs and, most tellingly, an erosion in front-line combat readiness – strongly support the conclusion that our military is significantly underfunded.

Throughout our nation's history, American troops have valiantly carried the banner of our country's ideals. They have protected the nation from invasion while also defending American principles and interests around the world. Today, the American military is the finest fighting force ever assembled. But, unfortunately, there are lingering questions about how effective it will be in the future.

1999 will represent the fourteenth straight year in which real defense spending has been cut. As a result, it is no longer clear that our military forces are as strong as they should be. For instance, could we effectively fight the Persian Gulf War today? Would we have the necessary intelligence? Are our troops fully prepared and trained for battle? Do we have all of the combat divisions and ships that we should? Are grave military threats simply being ignored? What about plans for the future? How are we modernizing and what assumptions are being made about potential threats for the next 20 years?

These are all important questions. This issue of *The American Sound* attempts to take a hard look at the answers, many of which you may not find comforting.

Rep. Porter Goss of Florida, a former CIA agent, begins by highlighting the important role intelligence gathering plays in our national defense. Decisionmakers need trustworthy and detailed intelligence to asses threats and determine actions. Goss argues that the CIA has become gun shy in recent years, unwilling to take needed risks for fear of reprisal from Members of Congress and the media. He presses for a well-informed constituency, cognizant that the CIA is forced to take risks and is not always successful in its endeavors.

Rep. Curt Weldon of Pennsylvania examines whether we are ignoring grave military threats, specifically those from a ballistic missile. He argues that it is imperative that we immediately begin to take the necessary steps to protect American cities.

One of the most important aspects of providing a cost-effective and strong national defense is maintaining a well-trained and well-prepared military. Among other things, this means that troops must constantly receive training and spare parts must be available in inventory.

Rep. Tillie Fowler of Florida provides a detailed and hard look at the current state of readiness. As she notes, "[O]ur nation's military is experiencing worrisome deficiencies. Today's forces are working harder and longer than ever before. Funding and forces continue to shrink, while the demands of the job increase." She concludes that if we do not take steps to correct these readiness shortfalls, "we will unnecessarily jeopardize the lives of our troops in times of crisis, render our populace vulnerable to an attack by weapons of mass destruction, and place our national priorities and interests at risk."

Rep. Stephen Buyer of Indiana, a veteran of the Gulf War, examines these readiness issues as well, noting that our military faces a variety of shortcomings. He notes that "it is unclear that if the need arose the United States would have the capability to respond to a Desert Storm equivalent with the same speed and effectiveness." He argues that the consequence of these shortcomings is "a large and growing gap between strategy and resources, between our defense commitments and the forces we have to keep those commitments; in short, between what we say we can do and what we actually can do. This is dangerous enough, but failure to confront this fact doubles the danger."

Finally, there is an article examining what it will take to build an effective military for the 21st century. This essay presents a balanced approach, advocating that we correct current readiness problems, maintain appropriate troop levels, ensure that we are prepared for any unseen threats in the near term, and aggressively develop new technologies.

The 20th century has been known as the American Century to a large extent because of our military resourcefulness. It was America that turned the tide in both World War I and World War II. It was America that led the fight to contain, and ultimately defeat, the evil of communism. Ensuring that we have a ready and well-structured military will mean that we are prepared, if necessary, to act again to defend American interests around the world.

A CONSTITUENCY FOR INTELLIGENCE

by Rep. Porter Goss

Earlier this summer, the government of India tested several nuclear bombs in a show of force. Pakistan, India's neighbor, quickly followed suit, and tensions in the region escalated. In the aftermath, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was widely attacked by both the media and Members of Congress for failing to foresee India's aggressive actions. The result of this "intelligence failure" was that the United States was unable to take any preemptive steps to discourage the nuclear tests before they began. Our government was left reacting to events after they occurred.

This is a cause for concern, as intelligence gathering is a vitally important aspect of our national defense. But our concern should not be placed simply on the intelligence breakdown. Rather, it is important to examine what is most likely the underlying cause, and that is a constituency unwilling to accept failure.

Not long ago, in the attic of one of our embassies abroad, the CIA's Chief of Station (COS) told me that his officers do not attempt to recruit officials or other citizens of the host country. "The risk," said the COS, "isn't worth the gain."

Make no mistake, the gain could be considerable. Citizens of that country were thought to be involved in selling weapons of mass destruction to certain hostile and rogue states, and officials of that country held plans and intentions on political, military, and economic matters that could adversely affect the interests of the United States.

The recruitment of sources within the companies proliferating these weapons could potentially give our government an opportunity to find ways to stop or counter key transactions. The recruitment of sources within the ministries of that country could help us anticipate and counter government actions that adversely affect our economic security or other national interests. In short, it is vital that this sort of recruitment takes place.

This, of course, begs the question as to why the COS was unwilling to engage in this type of activity. What was the risk that was seen as too great?

The immediate and most obvious risk for the CIA is that it will be caught trying to recruit or run these sources. The employee of the proliferating company might decline to cooperate, for example, and report the approach by an American. Or authorities might get suspicious of an official's friendship with an American and investigate. Or, as we know can happen in Washington, someone could leak a report to the press that exposes the CIA source. When exposed, the consequences for the CIA, in most cases, is some combination of admonishments, demarches, and ejections from the host country. These actions not only disrupt the operations of the CIA, but can

also affect the entire activities of our embassies.

However, none of the above "occupational hazards" was the risk about which the COS spoke. After all, the interest of the United States in preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to hostile and rogue states is well-known to the host country. And furthermore, the intelligence service of that host country is active against U.S. persons and companies of interest to its government. Our pursuit of the proliferation target through espionage, in sum, is within the "rules of the game" in our relationship with that country.

Rather, the risk to which the COS referred was the risk of a bad reaction by Congress and the press should something go wrong. With any misstep there is seemingly a race to be the first Member of Congress to declare an "intelligence failure" or to run the first headline about "The Gang Who Couldn't Shoot Straight."

With so many unyielding critics, the CIA has become gun shy. The concern is not over acceptable risks and consequences, but rather limited tolerance at home for any failure.

It is with this risk in mind that the COS has been told to back off from "unilateral" operations against valid and important targets in that country. The direct result is that our government will be less able to thwart proliferation by the companies of the host country. And our government will more likely be caught off guard by a change in political, military, or economic policy. The United States will not be in as good a position as it should to meet the transnational challenges of the next century.

The challenges before us are very real and very ominous. Saddam Hussein has turned the government of Iraq into an armed menace against its neighbors and its own people. China continues to be an international bazaar for proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Russian missiles still exist, but often in places and under the control of persons unknown. The paths of terrorism, narcotics trafficking, and international racketeering cross boundaries, enter boardrooms, and disappear into cyberspace.

The intelligence community is struggling against these difficult targets. There is the obvious lapse in detecting India's preparations for nuclear testing. And one recent study warns that the acquisition of ballistic missiles by rogue states may not be detectable by present means of collection. Most disturbing of all is that these missiles might be acquired not for the threat of use, but for actual use.

With so many unyielding critics, the CIA has become gun shy. The concern is not over acceptable risks and consequences, but rather limited tolerance at home for any failure.

This is not the time to ask that espionage by our intelligence community be risk-free. Policymakers need sources — human and technical — in the companies that sell weapons of mass destruction to hostile and rogue states. They need sources in governments that encourage proliferation or discourage our overt attempts to counter that proliferation. They need sources, finally, in governments that act with adverse consequence to U.S. interests. There is no way to proceed against these intelligence targets without risk.

Among lawyers, there is an old adage that a trial

lawyer who wins all of his cases isn't trying enough cases. Things go wrong in the courtroom: Witnesses can gulp or sneeze at the wrong time. Judges can doze. Juries can react to style instead of substance. Good cases can go down on bad luck and happenstance.

What is needed in Congress and among opinion leaders is an appreciation that the CIA, for one, is going to get caught from time to time in the pursuit of the information we in Washington must have to meet our new and difficult challenges.

It is the same with espionage. A flat tire. A chance recognition. A missed danger signal. All of these chance occurrences can spell disaster. A former colleague of mine at the CIA once arranged to meet a secret source in an empty lot that, by the day of the meeting, had become a police station. Another arranged a rendezvous with a source in a restaurant that was hosting an American Friendship banquet and wound up, with his source, sitting at the head banquet table. Both officers got through these calamities, but they know that they could just as easily have become a congressional focus or a headline. Their efforts resulted in better informed policymakers in the United States.

Returning to that COS who is unwilling to pursue human targets for intelligence gathering, it is important to recognize how vital that information could be. Policymakers urgently needed the intelligence he could, with reasonable risk and a little luck, provide on proliferation and government actions in his host country.

It is important that the CIA believes that Congress and the Washington community understand that, in the pursuit of these difficult and sometimes dangerous targets, there are risks that have to be taken and losses that have to be sustained. In the event of inadvertent compromise or a chance well taken, there should be no rush to the microphones on Capitol Hill to rail away about an "intelligence failure." Obviously the CIA does not have this belief.

What is needed in Congress and among opinion leaders is an appreciation that the CIA, for one, is going to get caught from time to time in the pursuit of the information we in Washington must have to meet our new and difficult challenges. What we need is an informed constituency able to balance those risks of espionage against the risks of ignorance.

Taken in this context, news of the CIA's next operational flap or compromise overseas can be seen in a slightly different light. Instead of asking why the CIA took such a chance, ask yourself how concerned you would be if the CIA hadn't.

There is no time to be wasted in developing that constituency. A generation of field managers in the CIA has learned that the successful COS is one who gets through an overseas tour without a "flap." Worse still, there is a generation of young street officers who

may be learning that hustle and initiative create risk and should therefore be avoided in the post-Cold War CIA. They may also be learning that mishaps are mistakes and mistakes are not forgiven in the new CIA.

There is particular concern about the effect of this risk-aversion on the young officers of the Agency. The shelf-life of their zeal and creativity is ultimately rather short, and we are losing time. And ultimately, our intelligence gathering network relies heavily on the spirit of the young street officer who slips out the back door at midnight, hops the fence, and meets the source with the intelligence we need.

Taken in this context, news of the CIA's next operational flap or compromise overseas can be seen in a slightly different light. Instead of asking why the CIA took such a chance, ask yourself how concerned you would be if the CIA hadn't.

The challenges we face from the now and often transnational threats require the help and insight of a strong intelligence network. To achieve this, we need a well-informed constituency at home, understanding that risks must be taken and not every attempt to gather intelligence will be successful.

Rep. Porter Goss of Florida, a former CIA agent, is the Chairman of the Select Committee on Intelligence.

DEFENDING AMERICAN FAMILIES FROM MISSILE ATTACK

by Rep. Curt Weldon

United States policymakers may have "little or no warning" that rogue nations such as Iran or North Korea have obtained the missile capability to strike American cities and families. And both nations can obtain such long-range missiles within five years of making a decision to acquire them. That's the unanimous conclusion of a report to Congress issued in July by the Rumsfeld Commission, a bipartisan panel of national security experts tasked with the duty of evaluating the emerging ballistic missile threat to the United States.

The Rumsfeld Commission also stated the ability of the U.S. intelligence community to provide timely and accurate estimates of the ballistic missile threat to the United States is eroding. In fact, the Commission stated that the missile threat to American cities is "broader, more mature, and evolving more rapidly than has been reported in estimates and reports" by the United States intelligence community.

The startling conclusions of the Rumsfeld Commission, which some Clinton Administration officials dismissed as inaccurate, were confirmed one week later when Iran tested the medium-range Shahab-3 missile. While the Administration coyly told reporters that they were not surprised by the test, it is worth noting that only one year ago intelligence sources predicted that Iran was a decade away from deploying the missile. The fact is, President Clinton underestimated the emerging missile threat, leaving U.S. troops throughout the Persian Gulf without adequate defensive systems to counter the threat posed by Iran.

Equally disturbing are statements made by the North Korean government earlier this summer that it will continue to export missile technology and expertise to countries such as Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, and Syria unless the United States lifts the economic embargo and makes compensation to North Korea for the lost revenue that would result from discontinuing its missile exports.

But that's only the tip of the iceberg. During the past couple of months press reports have revealed that China is discussing the sale of missile test equipment to Iran and is assisting Libya with developing its own missile program. Intelligence analysts have warned that North Korea may be able to skip the test phase of its long-range Taepo Dong 1 missile and move directly to fielding it because of valuable test data supplied by Pakistan. Russian General Alexander Lebed (ret.), Governor of the Krasnoyarsk region, threatened to take over a nuclear missile unit in the Siberian region he governs if Moscow did not pay its troops. And China added six new intercontinental ballistic missiles to its arsenal during the first four months of 1998, with plans to add two more by the end of the year. The addition of eight new ICBMs to China's arsenal, the majority of which have targeted U.S. cities, marks a 44 percent increase in its long-range stockpile.

Opponents of deploying a national missile defense argue that no nation would dare threaten the

United States with long-range missiles — missiles potentially tipped with devastating chemical, biological, or nuclear warheads. But several nations have already leveled such threats against the United States. Many Americans may recall China's attempt to intimidate Taiwanese voters prior to their presidential election in March 1996 by firing ballistic missiles a few miles off their coastal waters. But unknown to the general public is the thinly veiled threat — issued in an attempt to prevent U.S. interference in the region — made by China's Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Lt. Gen. Xiong Guang Kai, who stated that Americans "care more about Los Angeles than Taiwan."

Such a capability in the hands of rogue nations, however, is even more frightening. In 1990, Saddam Hussein stated that "Our missiles cannot reach Washington. If they could reach Washington, we would strike if the need arose." Imagine the implications in the Persian Gulf War had Iraq obtained such a capability. Had New York City or Washington, DC been in danger of a missile attack, American public opinion almost certainly would have prevented President George Bush from coming to the aid of Kuwait. Abu Abbas, the head of the Palestinian Liberation Front, made similar assertions, stating that "Revenge takes forty years, if not my son, then the son of my son will kill you. Someday, we will have missiles that can reach New York."

Yet, despite the growing missile capabilities among rogue nations, President Clinton — well-known for expressing his concern over the safety of America's children — refuses to make the decision to provide the families of the United States with a defensive system to protect them from missile attack. Instead, the President has taken a "wait and see" approach, ignoring recent developments and making the ridiculous argument that there is no clear missile threat to the United States.

Until now, President Clinton has been given a free pass on the issue, both by the American public and the media. But it is hard to blame the American public. After all, President Clinton has gone out of his way to assure them that there is no missile threat facing them. A speech he gave in October 1995 is a perfect example: "For the first time since the dawn of the nuclear age, there is not a single solitary nuclear missile pointed at an American child tonight. Not one. Not one. Not a single one." Apparently none of President Clinton's advisors informed him that China's missiles were targeted on U.S. cities and that the detargeting agreement with Russia was unverifiable. Perhaps the President could be forgiven if had only made that incorrect statement on that one occasion. But he hasn't. He has made similar statements to the American people on more than 130 separate occasions, telling them over and over that their children no longer face the threat of a missile attack.

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Correcting the public record has not been an easy task. Many Americans have taken the President's statements at face value, falsely believing that with

the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union the world is a safer place. And many Americans believe that the Strategic Defense Initiative envisioned by President Ronald Reagan was actually deployed, giving the United States the ability to shoot down incoming missiles. Misleading footage from the Persian Gulf War showing the Patriot theater missile defense system intercept Iraqi Scud missiles has not aided public understanding either. One recent, nationwide poll found that an overwhelming 73 percent of Americans did not know that America lacked the ability to destroy even a single incoming ballistic missile fired on the United States.

One recent, nationwide poll found that an overwhelming 73 percent of Americans did not know that America lacked the ability to destroy even a single incoming ballistic missile fired on the United States.

When the President is challenged to defend his inaction on this issue, Clinton Administration officials point to his 3 Plus 3 missile defense program as evidence that they are serious about defending the nation. According to the Administration, the 3 Plus 3 program consists of three years of research and development to be completed in the year 2000 before making the potential decision to deploy a national missile defense system by 2003. But in reality, 3 Plus 3 is nothing more than a clever ruse constructed by the Administration, allowing President Clinton to deflect public and Congressional criticism by creating the appearance of action while allowing him to delay indefinitely a commitment to deploy.

A closer look at the Administration's 3 Plus 3 program reveals it for what it is, a sham. President Clinton's failure to take national missile defense seriously is revealed by his repeated failure to adequately fund his own 3 Plus 3 program. In fact, Congress was forced to add $1.3 billion to the program in FY'96, FY'97, and FY'98. Without these adds, the President's 3 Plus 3 program would be even further behind schedule. Additionally, President Clinton has not even provided the long lead funding that would be necessary for the deployment of a national missile defense in 2003, as described in its 3 Plus 3 program. No long lead funds have been provided in the Administration's FY'99 budget, and no funds for procurement have been included in the President's Future Years Defense Plan (FYDP). Those are hardly the actions of an Administration determined to defend the American people.

Similarly, the Clinton Administration has made no effort to begin talks with Russia on the issue of deployment of national missile defense. One can safely assume that if the Administration was truly serious about making a decision to deploy a national missile defense system in the year 2000 that at the very least it would have begun discussion with Russia on the issue of deployment and its impact on U.S.-Russian relations.

President Clinton's foot-dragging on this issue is unacceptable. The combination of increasing missile threats and building evidence that we cannot completely rely on the estimates of our intelligence community require the United States to take action now to defend the American people. Legislation currently pending before the House of Representatives will do just that. The entire text of the bill reads as follows: "That it is the policy of the United States to deploy a

national missile defense." While this bill may seem short and simple, it will fundamentally alter Clinton Administration policy and for the first time in history make it the official policy of the United States to deploy a national missile defense system.

The benefits of making the commitment now to deploy a national missile defense are many. First, it sends a clear message to the military and defense contractors that the United States is ready to move from the indefinite study phase to a serious program of planning and execution, kick-starting efforts to aggressively pursue a national missile defense program. A commitment to deploy will also send Russia a clear message that we are serious about defending American citizens. Making our intentions official will allow us to complete the timely process of amending the Anti-Ballistic missile Treaty of 1972, if needed, so that both Russia and the United States are able to defend against a missile attack from potential adversaries.

Just as important, a commitment to deploy will send a message to rogue nations that their efforts to obtain the missile capability to strike the United States will not go unchallenged. If rogue nations realize that their long-range missiles can be defended against, they may not expend the time and hundreds of millions of dollars to develop a useless capability to strike the United States.

Finally, making the commitment to deploy will allow us to move forward with providing American families with a defense against the growing missile threat. It will put us on the right track and allow us to begin to provide the long-lead funding that will be necessary to deploy a national missile defense. The fact is that we possess the technology and means to deploy a national missile defense, a system that will ensure the safety of American families and protect our ability to practice foreign policy free from nuclear blackmail by our enemies.

Contrary to what opponents would have the American public believe, the United States can deploy an affordable national missile defense system. According to the Congressional Budget Office a limited missile defense system, with up to 20 missile interceptors, could cost around $6 billion. Although at first glance that may seem like a lot, it is significantly less than what our troop deployment in Bosnia has cost American taxpayers to date. Wouldn't our money be better spent protecting both the lives and the national security interests of American citizens?

With the continued proliferation of missile technology and weapons of mass destruction, as well as recent intelligence failings, rogue nations may deploy long-range missiles that can strike American families before we are aware that they have even developed such a capability. Continued delay of deploying a national missile defense system is an unconscionable risk that the United States cannot afford to make. Unless we act now, there is a real chance that it may be too late. With the lives of millions of Americans at stake, that is not a chance the Republican Congress should be willing to take.

Rep. Curt Weldon of Pennsylvania is the Chairman of the House National Security Committee's Research and Development Subcommittee. He is the author of H.R. 4402, scheduled to be considered in the House this September.

NATIONAL SECURITY: GETTING BACK TO BASICS

by Rep. Tillie Fowler

To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace.

— George Washington, Address to Congress, 1790

It is hard to argue with President Washington's logic. Yet, today, there is a growing and justified concern about the level of preparedness of our country's military. Despite the fact that our Founding Fathers saw national defense as one of the main purposes of government, our country in recent years has grown less attentive to issues of national security. It is assumed by many that in the absence of a "peer global competitor" like the Soviet Union, we can continue to ratchet down what we spend on troops and equipment each year. In reality, nothing could be further from the truth.

Our nation's military is experiencing worrisome deficiencies. Today's forces are working harder and longer than ever before. Funding and forces continue to shrink, while the demands of the job increase.

Clearly, in 1998, we do not need a force sized to fight the Cold War. However, we do need a force that can credibly deter conflict in areas that are important to us, and can fight and win, with a minimum of risk and casualties, those conflicts that we cannot deter.

At home, our military must be ready to safeguard the American people from the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction — nuclear, chemical, and biological arms — as well as the means to deliver such weapons. These weapons are increasingly being pursued by rogue states like North Korea and Iran, and proliferated by China and Russia.

Beyond our shores, we need to ensure the security of our nation's foreign trade, which totaled more than $1.5 trillion in 1997, and shield the many trillions more in U.S. investments overseas. And we need to guarantee the availability of the energy resources that propel our economy, at least forty percent of which come to this country by sea.

Whether it is called upon to face down dictators and ensure peace in the Persian Gulf or on the Korean peninsula, provide a reassuring presence as financial crisis rocks Southeast Asia, or stand up to missile tests by the Chinese military which threaten our friend Taiwan, our military must be equipped and prepared to meet our national security requirements.

Unfortunately, despite these many needs — and at a time when the Clinton Administration seems determined to engage our military in more and more enterprises of dubious relevance to our true national security interests — the defense spending pendulum has swung too far in the wrong direction. The FY'99 defense budget represents the fourteenth year in a row that defense spending, when adjusted for inflation, has declined. As a percentage of GDP, spending for defense under the Clinton Administration will drop to its lowest level since the Great Depression.

As a result, our nation's military is experiencing worrisome deficiencies. Today's forces are working harder and longer than ever before. Funding and forces continue to shrink, while the demands of the job increase. For example, the Army has conducted 26 "operational events" — actions other than routine training and alliance operations — since 1991, compared to only 10 during the preceding 31 years. Likewise, since 1992, the Air Force has undertaken more than 500 humanitarian missions just to states of the former Soviet Union.

These increases in operational tempo have occurred during the same period that the Army's force structure has been reduced from 18 to 10 divisions; the Navy's fleet is set to decline by nearly 250 ships, or 45 percent of the fleet; and the Air Force has been reduced from 24 to 12 fighter wings. And under the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), the Administration last year adopted still further cuts in military personnel levels.

Because of these funding reductions and increased operating tempos, unit readiness levels have often declined precipitously. By the end of this year, some $10 billion will have been bled away from the Armed Forces' budgets to meet the Clinton Administration's goals in Bosnia. These reductions have come at the expense of training, maintenance, modernization and other key readiness investments.

Commanders and troops have told the House National Security Committee that spare parts shortages have led to the cannibalization of front-line equipment like our B-1B bombers, which were stripped to the point that only half of them could fly at any one time. Combat systems are being operated at a pace that requires far more maintenance and repair than planners anticipated, resulting in ever-growing maintenance backlogs. As a result, the Navy's FY'99 budget submission anticipated the deferral of overhauls on nearly 700 aircraft engines -- an all-time high for the fleet.

Spare parts shortages have led to the cannibalization of front-line equipment like our B-1B bombers, which were stripped to the point that only half of them could fly at any one time.

It has also been noted that the conditions in which military personnel live and work are deteriorating below acceptable standards because of our lack of investment. At current rates, the Navy's replacement cycle for buildings is almost 100 years, while the Marine Corps' is nearly 200 years.

Such shortfalls are serious drains on efficiency and morale. They result in heightened rates of overseas deployment for our decreasing numbers of troops. This translates into increased time separated from families, and more hours on the job even when troops are not deployed. This has driven increasing num-

bers of personnel, including individuals with critical skills like pilots and maintenance crews, to leave military service. The U.S. Air Force says 775 pilots left in the first five months of FY'98, up from 632 who left in all FY'97. Experts expect these retention problems to continue, with departures doubling by 2002.

A May 1998 memo from Navy Secretary John Dalton to Defense Secretary Bill Cohen highlighted the Navy's concerns about these funding shortfalls. In his memo, Secretary Dalton warned that, "As a consequence of our near-term actions, we found we could not afford our long-term strategy to both modernize and recapitalize our naval forces within fiscal guidance, thereby placing future readiness at significant risk."

A memo sent the same day to Secretary Cohen by Acting Army Secretary Mike Walker highlighted similar concerns, noting that under the Clinton budget proposal, "Army programs will fall short of providing a trained, ready, and modern Army into the next century."

At current rates, the Navy's replacement cycle for buildings is almost 100 years, while the Marine Corps' is nearly 200 years.

The chiefs of our military services concur, though they are constrained from saying so openly. Earlier this year, pressed by House National Security Committee Chairman Floyd Spence, they reported to the Congress that they need $58 billion more than the Clinton Administration's budget allows over the next five years to meet their most critical military requirements.

In response, the Clinton Administration has pushed base closure and outsourcing as the answers to our military's funding problems. The civilian leadership at the Pentagon asserts that further base closure, or "BRAC" rounds, will generate savings of about $3 billion annually after completion. They also claim that business reforms which promote outsourcing will achieve budget savings on the order of thirty percent for effected functions.

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While we must always be willing to take a hard look at current ways of doing things, donning rose-colored glasses is not the answer to real problems. The Administration's claims that we can compensate for severe funding shortfalls through savings from base closure and outsourcing fall into this category. It is utter nonsense.

With regard to base closure, no actual assessments validating the Administration's claims have been done. The savings projections are broad estimates based on previous BRAC actions. These estimates, however, do not include the costs of environmental clean-up, which run into the billions of dollars. And the figures bandied about by the Administration are based simply on averaged projections of savings throughout the four previous rounds of BRAC. They do not

take into account where today's excess capacity resides, or address specific costs or savings associated with that excess capacity.

Even more importantly, base closure will not provide any surplus of funds in the timeframe required to address our most pressing readiness and modernization needs. Even if one argues that long-term savings would be generated by a BRAC round held in 2001, as the Administration has requested, those savings would not likely be generated until 2007 at the earliest — well beyond the point that additional resources are needed.

The bottom line is that our defense budget is underfunded to the tune of $10 billion a year, if not more.

Likewise, the Administration's projections of savings by outsourcing work currently performed by Defense Department civilians are highly questionable. An internal Army study has recently documented that "in the aggregate, the contract work force is more expensive than the in-house work force."

And Navy Assistant Secretary John Douglass recently lamented the Navy's overly optimistic outsourcing projections, which resulted in nearly $5 billion in "savings" being programmed into the Navy budget over the next few years — savings that simply will not materialize. In March 1998, Douglass observed, "A lot of people don't know this, but there is a huge ... outsourcing wedge imbedded in the Navy budget, and it's just like a cancer or something eating at us on the inside."

It is time we made defense a priority once more.

The bottom line is that our defense budget is underfunded to the tune of $10 billion a year, if not more. The President and Congress need to take this deficiency into consideration when debating how the current budget surplus will be distributed and commit the necessary resources to meet our real national security needs. If we do not, we will unnecessarily jeopardize the lives of our troops in times of crisis, render our populace vulnerable to an attack by weapons of mass destruction, and place our national priorities and interests at risk.

Echoing George Washington's wisdom with respect to the importance of preparation, Teddy Roosevelt said more than a century ago, "Speak softly and carry a big stick." These men, who knew the horrors of war and had every right to want to enjoy the fruits of peacetime, spoke words of which we should remind ourselves today.

Rep. Tillie Fowler of Florida is a member of the House National Security Committee.

STRATEGIC REALITY

by Rep. Stephen Buyer

Eight years ago this August, Iraq's army rolled across the border into Kuwait. In response, President George Bush marshaled a global coalition that ultimately beat back and reversed Saddam Hussein's aggression. The heart and strength of the coalition was the Armed Forces of the United States of America.

Now, less than a decade later, it is unclear that if the need arose the United States would have the capability to respond to a Desert Storm equivalent with the same speed and effectiveness. For instance, in the Gulf, the Army deployed about seven and two-thirds divisions, including about five and two-thirds tank divisions, out of an active-duty Army of 18 divisions. Today, the entire active Army is just ten divisions, and only about 6 and one-third are heavy mechanized and armor formations. The Navy and Air Force have also suffered cutbacks of similar scale since Desert Storm. In short, a large part of the force that fought the Gulf War has been retired.

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This is a problem that has been in the making for several years. Since the end of the Cold War, America's ability to create a coherent national military strategy and build a defense program based upon that strategy has proved an elusive task. From the Bush Administration's "Base Force" concept, through the Clinton-era Bottom-Up Review and Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), to the independent Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces and National Defense Panel, scarcely a year has passed without some attempt to solve the complex security and defense puzzle we face today.

Yet none of these strategic reviews and reports has produced a lasting solution. Each has addressed a part of the problem, while none has provided a reliable road-map that can give the Pentagon the direction it needs to raise, train and equip the forces America needs while being a responsible steward of taxpayers' dollars. Likewise, Congress finds it increasingly difficult to approve defense budgets without a better understanding of what the strategic purpose of our military is; it's hard to know *how much* is enough when you're unsure *what* it's for.

Since the Gulf War, the one consistent measurement has been that our military should be capable of successfully fighting two simultaneous "major theater wars." The need for this standard is obvious. North Korea still maintains its million man army and continues efforts to procure nuclear weapons, Saddam Hussein remains poised to make trouble, China has nuclear weapons pointed at the United States with

recently improved guidance technology, and Pakistan and India have recently been threatening each other with nuclear missile tests. Yet, as already noted, the ability of U.S. forces to conduct a single Desert Storm-sized operation is open to question. The idea that we could fight two nearly simultaneously is dubious at best.

The Administration's most recent strategic review, the QDR, reaffirms the "two major theater war" benchmark, noting that it is the keystone of U.S. leadership in the world. Yet the QDR strategy does not stop there — it accepts as reality the practice of multiple, long-lasting and continuing peacekeeping operations such as in Bosnia, Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, Macedonia and perhaps, soon, Kosovo. Largely without debate, the Administration has made these quixotic efforts to "shape the international environment" of equal importance to the mission of U.S. armed forces as fighting and winning the nation's wars. It takes 12 months to return an Army Division assigned to peacekeeping to the readiness levels required to be successful on the battlefield.

And there's more. The revolution in technology — particularly information technology — that is changing every aspect of our world from how we conduct our businesses to how we communicate with our families will also affect how wars are fought. The QDR acknowledges the need to prepare for a future that may be very different from the past. After Operation Desert Storm, few of our potential adversaries relish the prospect of going tank-to-tank or aircraft-to-aircraft with the U.S. military. But they may very well prefer to strike us with ballistic missiles, weapons of mass destruction, or even more exotic forms of attack.

Yet, unfortunately, the Administration's expanding military strategy has been accompanied by a continuing reduction in the size of our forces and in defense spending. Today's services are stretched nearly to the limit to conduct the peacekeeping operations favored by President Clinton. These missions have proven to be much more burdensome and long-lasting than originally advertised.

A recent RAND Corporation study revealed that the need by the Air Force to constantly conduct no-fly-zone operations over Bosnia and northern and southern Iraq was not only absorbing most of the service's fighter strength but in fact was overtaxing the service's smaller fleet of sophisticated electronic aircraft like the AWACS planes that control the fighters. The resulting pressures have recently caused the U.S. Air Force to reorganize itself for the first time since the end of the Cold War into an expeditionary force that can more aptly respond to increasingly taxing operations other than war.

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Nor are things any better for the sea services. The U.S. Navy will soon have barely 300 ships, compared

to the Reagan Administration goal of 600 ships. At current rates of ship construction, the number is sure to decline further. Marine Commandant General Charles Krulak, perhaps the most plain-spoken of the current service chiefs, admitted to the House National Security Committee this past spring that his Marine Corps was not capable of meeting the two-theater-war requirement.

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The consequence of these shortcomings is a large and growing gap between strategy and resources, between our defense commitments and the forces we have to keep those commitments; in short, between what we say we can do and what we actually can do. This is dangerous enough, but failure to confront this fact doubles the danger. If we do face the truth, and seek to close the strategy-resources gap, we have three options to consider:

- We can scale back our strategic aims through a process that re-examines not only our commitment to a two-theater war requirement, but also to an engagement strategy that so frequently commits our military forces to operations other than war (OOTW). A reduction in humanitarian and peacekeeping commitments would allow an improved allocation of defense resources.

- We can devote more resources to defense. While this would preserve U.S. leadership and preserve our unquestioned military prowess, it would be expensive. Current official estimates of the gap between strategy and resources are about $80 billion over the five-year defense plan. But even this huge figure is likely underestimated. World leadership cannot be conducted on the cheap, and the current level of defense spending — about 3 percent of GDP — is inadequate to preserve leadership over the long haul.

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- We can encourage our allies to bear a greater responsibility for the collective security, peacekeeping, and the settlement of lesser conflicts that are essentially regional in nature. If we are to share the benefits of peace, then we can also share the burdens of preserving the peace.

Given the severe gaps between our stated national strategy and our dwindling resources, and between our growing humanitarian and peacekeeping commitments and the forces available respond to national security commitments, no single prescriptive option will be sufficient to correct the glaring mismatch between current national military strategy and available resources. It is obvious that the Administration, and Congress, must come to grips with this strategic reality and determine which prescriptions - and what amounts - are required to keep America's military ready for tomorrow's challenges.

Rep. Stephen Buyer of Indiana, a veteran of the Gulf War, is the Chairman of the House National Security Committee's Subcommittee on Military Personnel.

BUILDING A MILITARY FOR THE 21st CENTURY

by Rep. James Talent

As we approach the dawn of a new century, the United States must build a military ready for the challenges that lie ahead. There are many issues to resolve, including whether current funding levels are adequate and how to modernize and structure the force for future missions. The choices made today will dramatically affect the effectiveness of our military for several decades.

Advocates of an emerging "Revolution in Military Affairs" (RMA) speak of a "threat trough" over the next 15 to 20 years in which America lacks a peer military competitor. They assume relative stability over this period, thus presenting the United States with an opportunity to prepare, through a cancellation or reduction of current major weapons programs, and an unprecedented increase in R&D and warfighting experiments, to deal with an emerging and as yet undefined threat. The end result of this process would be a slimmed down, technology-driven American military. The existing budget cap is assumed to remain in place.

A more measured approach — an evolution in military affairs – would place greater emphasis on correcting today's readiness shortfalls, retaining current personnel and force structure, meeting the Joint Chief's modernization goals, increasing R&D to a robust level, and accepting that the next 10 to 20 years may indeed hold great risk. Such an approach would likely require a sustained and inflation-adjusted increase of no less than $15 billion per year to meet these objectives.

The differences between these two schools of thought are dramatic. Should we fully implement the doctrine subscribed to by RMA supporters, we could pour our resources into building a military for an unknown threat down the road, while, at the same time, draining away our capability to defend American interests in the interim.

Our declared national military strategy requires the ability to fight and win two major theater wars, or Desert Storm-type conflicts, nearly simultaneously. In comparison with the force deployed in the Gulf – seven Army divisions, two Marine divisions, and the equivalent of 26 allied coalition brigades – the Army's current 10 division force structure is sufficient to prosecute only one major regional conflict while leaving three active divisions and our reserve components to support all other U.S. interests in Europe, Korea, along the Pacific Rim, and elsewhere. Nearly everyone accepts that today's force is more the product of budgetary priorities than any serious attempt to size

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Since 1990, the active Army has decreased from 770,000 to 495,000 personnel. The 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), on which the FY'99 budget request is largely based, acknowledged the increased demands of peacekeeping – and then called for further reductions to 480,000. In testimony before the House National Security Personnel Subcommittee in 1993, several senior retired Army leaders, anticipating the heightened demands that open-ended peacekeeping missions would place on the force in addition to its primary warfighting mission, recommended a minimum end strength of approximately 550,000.

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The consequences of an inadequately sized force are significant. Since the Berlin Wall came down in 1989, the Army's operational tempo (OPTEMPO) has increased by approximately 300 percent. The Army over that time has shouldered about 60 percent of the manpower share of our overseas deployments. Today's high peacetime deployment rate, matched against our smaller force, goes a long way toward explaining statements like "stretched and strained," "breaking the force," and "going over the cliff" from senior Army leaders.

Training is suffering as well. The Center for Army Lessons Learned, located at Fort Leavenworth, publishes a document called *National Training Center Trends Compendium*. The most recent edition covers the 2-1/2 year period from early FY '95 through mid-FY '97. It characterizes a unit as demonstrating "positive performance" or "needs emphasis" in each of 70 battlefield skills associated with the Army's seven battlefield operating systems: (1) intelligence, (2) maneuver, (3) fire support, (4) air defense, (5) mobility and survivability, (6) combat service support, and (7) command and control.

This edition of the *Trends Compendium* reports that over the period, units rotating through the NTC demonstrated "positive performance" in 13 battlefield skills and "needs emphasis" in 57 battlefield skills. That's positive performance in 19 percent of these skills. The remaining 81 percent required additional emphasis.

The report conveys that many soldiers, staffs, and units are demonstrating considerable deficiencies in their critical combat skills and in their unit's ability to shoot, move and communicate – and that they are demonstrating these deficiencies at the very point in their tactical training – during force-on-force maneuvers at the NTC – when they should be most proficient, after a months-long trainup in preparation for the deployment to Fort Irwin.

The Pentagon also confronts mounting shortfalls in modernization. Since FY'86, procurement has taken a nose dive, dropping nearly 70 percent. In 1996, the Joint Chiefs called for increasing modernization to $60 billion per year. In this year's budget, the Defense Department, for the first time in 13 years, proposed a modest increase. The cumulative effects

of time and our high operational tempo ensure that many of our major weapons platforms must be replaced sooner than expected – or force structure must be further reduced. In addition, maintenance is deferred. Cross-leveling, or cannibalization, for parts quietly becomes more commonplace in the motor pool. Operational readiness for major systems continues to slip. Depot maintenance backlogs continue to grow. Where do we draw the line?

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Finally, we have no idea what the future may hold in terms of conflict or peer competitor capabilities. And our track record on predicting conflict since World War II is less than impressive. Consider the following:

- Less than 24 hours before North Korea invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950, President Truman's first Secretary of Defense, Louis Johnson, announced a further substantial reduction in the future defense budget;
- In mid-1965, almost no one inside the Johnson Administration expected that U.S. military action in Vietnam – peak deployment at 550,000 soldiers, total deployment of 3.3 million service personnel, total cost of $150 billion, and the near-total hollowing of our force in Europe – would become such an all-encompassing commitment.

The Revolution in Military Affairs theorists would have Congress ignore these trends, sacrifice near term readiness, and concentrate totally on concepts for the year 2020. But American power must be credible in the here and now. It is useless to pretend that the international order can maintain itself while America takes a holiday.

There is no alternative to making the case for more military spending. With even inflationary increases in the budget, we could take steps towards readiness today and tomorrow while increasing R&D funding for the future.

If we are to remain true to our national interests, we do not have the option of continued neglect. Military unpreparedness on our part will only encourage conflict, and not on our terms. It is a question of resourcing and will. General Gordon Sullivan, former Army Chief of Staff, recently wrote the following:

To assume peace and then mortgage short and mid-term readiness in order to fund an unprecedented and broad-ranging R&D program is both naïve and possibly dangerous.

"Unless the current spending profile for national security measures is

> increased…we will once again be asking our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines to pay the price in lives and blood – because we as a nation were not willing to sustain the force."

The problems are real; our soldiers confront them everyday. To assume peace and then mortgage short and mid-term readiness in order to fund an unprecedented and broad-ranging R&D program is both naïve and possibly dangerous.

Military spending is now effectively flatlined, and does not allow for a sustainable defense. Implementing the program advocated by supporters of a RMA would make matters much worse, especially for the next two decades. On the other hand, an evolution in military affairs would allow us to correct several current deficiencies while modernizing for the future. While we debate how best to distribute any surplus, we must not overlook the Federal government's primary responsibility – national defense — and how best to prepare our military for the challenges of the next few decades.

Rep. Jim Talent is a member of the House National Security Committee.

The American Sound

The American Sound is a project of Rep. John Boehner of Ohio and Rep. James Talent of Missouri. Its purpose is to propose, promote, and defend innovative and principled solutions to the long-term challenges facing the country, while relying and focusing on traditional American values: freedom, responsibility, faith, opportunity.

John Boehner

John A. Boehner *("Bay-ner")*, elected to represent the 8th Congressional District of Ohio for a fourth term in 1996, has made it his mission to reform Congress and to make the federal government smaller, more effective, and more accountable to the people it serves.

John's first two terms were marked by an aggressive campaign to clean up the House of Representatives and make it more accountable to the American people. In his freshman year, he and fellow members of the reform organization known as the "Gang of Seven" took on the liberal House establishment and successfully closed the House Bank, uncovered "dine-and-dash" practices at the House Restaurant and exposed drug sales and cozy cash-for-stamps deals at the House Post Office.

John was instrumental in the origin, execution, and successful completion of the House Republicans' *Contract with America* — the bold 100-day agenda for the 104th Congress which nationalized the 1994 elections.

Boehner also serves as Chairman of the House Republican Conference, the fourth highest post in the House Republican leadership.

Born in 1949, John is one of 12 brothers and sisters and a lifelong resident of southwest Ohio. After college, Boehner accepted a job with a struggling sales business in the packaging and plastics industry which he eventually took over and built into a successful enterprise. His gradual foray into politics grew out of that business experience, where he witnessed first-hand big government's increasing chokehold on American business.

John is married to the former Debbie Gunlack and has two daughters, Lindsay and Tricia. They reside in West Chester, Ohio.

James Talent

James M. Talent, 41, is a third-term Republican representing the second district of Missouri. He has a history of fighting for legislation that combats bloated federal bureaucracy and returns power and resources back to the people. He has been a strong proponent of the balanced budget, middle-class tax relief, and term limits for Congress.

Talent has also been a leader in developing sound social policy. In 1994, he introduced the Real Welfare Reform Act, which later became the basis for the welfare bill that was signed into law in 1996. He is also the co-author of the American Community Renewal Act, a bill designed to foster moral and economic renewal in our nation's low-income communities.

Concerned with the readiness and resources of our nation's military, Talent formed an Ad Hoc Committee to the National Security Committee called the Hollow Forces Update Committee in the 103rd Congress. The Committee served to keep Congress appraised of the dangerous effects of President Clinton's defense budget cuts.

Talent is currently the Chairman of the House Small Business Committee. Additionally, Talent has served in numerous leadership capacities, including being named Freshman and Sophomore Class Whip for the 103rd and 104th Congresses. Last Congress, Talent was named Deputy Regional Whip by Majority Whip Tom DeLay and was appointed by the Speaker to co-chair the Task Force on Empowerment and Race Relations and serve on the Republican Task Force on Welfare Reform.

Talent and his wife, Brenda, were married in 1984. They have three children: Michael, Kate, and Christine.